

is, health care reform, particularly financing it, is not a subject for the fainthearted. There is a reason this issue has been tough to tackle since the days of Harry Truman of 60 years ago. But under the leadership of Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and the Finance Committee—and I think I can speak for Senators on both sides of the aisle that we are very appreciative of what Chairman KENNEDY and Senator ENZI are doing in the HELP Committee. The four of them are our committee leaders, our chairs and our ranking minority members. I believe that this time, after 60 years of working on this issue, it can get done.

The fact is, for health reformers, the history of trying to fix health care is almost the story of unrequited love. If you look back on this issue, almost every 15 years reformers say: This is the time. I finally found the one. I am going to be able to have my dreams realized.

Of course, it has been exactly 15 years since the last effort in 1994, during the Clinton years. Harry and Louise pretty much soured that romance in 1993 and 1994. But I do think, largely because of the good work being done by Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and Chairman KENNEDY and Senator ENZI, this year is different. A lot of colleagues on both sides of the aisle have moved toward an approach that I believe will allow us to come together.

There is a recognition that Democrats have been right on the proposition that if you fix this, you have to cover everybody. If you don't get all Americans high-quality, affordable coverage, you have that cost-shifting I spoke about and inadequate attention to prevention. I think there is a recognition that colleagues on the other side of the aisle in the Republican Party are making valid points as well. There ought to be private choices. It is important not to freeze innovation. We ought to stay clear of price controls. So there is an opportunity now, with the Senate being led by two very fine chairs and ranking minority members, to get this done.

I will close with an observation from a number of economists. Our country clearly is concerned about the cost of these bailouts and financial obligations in the banking and housing sector. Most of those folks believe that the astounding sums being spent on financial bailouts—they are going to look like a rounding error if health care is not fixed. So the stakes are very high. Fixing the economy means fixing health care.

With the principles I have outlined here today, the four immediate principles of health care and cost containment, I think the Senate can get off on the most important and most difficult issue of health care—containing costs—and do it in a bipartisan way.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CRAIG FUGATE NOMINATION

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, a couple of weeks ago, Senator MARTINEZ and I had the privilege of introducing Craig Fugate, President Obama's nominee for the head of FEMA, before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. The committee promptly reported him right out. It is because he is so uniquely qualified.

Craig has served as the director of emergency management in our State since 2001, and he has overseen the response to 11 Presidentially declared disasters in our State. He is one of the most respected leaders in emergency management in the country, and he is the one—if you want a pro's pro—with the experience and the expertise FEMA needs at this time. Why? Look at how he came up: a former firefighter, a paramedic, a fire rescue lieutenant, an emergency manager. All of that was at the local government level, Alachua County, which is Gainesville, FL.

He spent 15 years working in local emergency management before he went up to the Emergency Operations Center at the State level. Since he has become the director of emergency management, he has handled the responses to the landfall of five major hurricanes in Florida, and that was within a 2-year time period.

I will never forget when Hurricane Charley came barreling up the southwest Florida coast headed straight for Tampa Bay. Suddenly, at the last minute, it took a right-hand turn and it went right up Charlotte Bay. Ground zero was Punta Gorda, FL.

By the way, people had evacuated Tampa and then come down to the hotels, especially the Holiday Inn Punta Gorda, and here they are right in the middle of the storm.

That storm was so intense that it blew the roof off of the Charlotte County Emergency Operation Center. They had to evacuate the CCEOC in the middle of the storm. I got there later that day, after the storm hit that morning, and I will never forget seeing Craig in the mobile emergency operation center that the State of Florida brought in as he was taking over and directing operations in the midst of that chaos. Our Florida emergency management response to disasters—with a sense of urgency and efficiency—has emerged as a role model for disaster preparation and disaster response. That, in large part, has been as a result of the leadership of Craig Fugate.

It is also very interesting, when you respond to these kinds of national disasters, that you have cooperation between the civilian emergency response

and the National Guard. Of course, the Florida National Guard is the best in the business because they know how to take care of business when it comes to emergency response to hurricanes.

Under Craig's leadership, Florida has become the first State to receive full accreditation for its emergency management program. Craig not only has creativity but a sense of humor. He judges things after a hurricane by the "Waffle House" test. He says if the Waffle House is open after the hurricane, that means there is power and water in there. If the Waffle House is closed, things are pretty bad, and a lot of things have been shut down. If the Waffle House is open and they have a limited menu, then it generally means the power has been out for quite a while because everything in their freezer has melted and has spoiled.

I think Craig's exemplary service speaks for itself.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a number of documents be printed in the RECORD, including a letter from Governor Crist, and a letter from a host of organizations, all the way from the Public Works Association, the American Red Cross—I will not list them all, but it goes through the National Wildlife Federation and the Reinsurance Association of America. Another one is by the Council of State Governments. Everybody is singing Craig Fugate's praises.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

APRIL 17, 2009.

Hon. BILL NELSON,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. MEL MARTINEZ,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS NELSON AND MARTINEZ: I would like to extend my most sincere appreciation to you for introducing Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate at his United States Senate confirmation hearing on Wednesday, April 22. Craig's nomination to be the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency instills a great sense of pride in all Floridians. Although his confirmation would mean that we are losing a great asset to our state, Craig's renowned expertise in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities will, without a doubt, benefit our entire nation.

As you well know, Craig has consistently proven to be among the most respected leaders in emergency management through his outstanding work and vast experience. As the Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Craig has dealt with every type of natural disaster ranging from wildfires to hurricanes, and he has managed them all effectively through his total commitment to ensuring the safety of Florida's citizens.

For Craig, success is not about personal glory. Instead, it is about building a great team that takes action to prepare for, and respond to, disasters and their impacts. I know we share the belief that Craig would utilize this same leadership philosophy as FEMA director.

In advance, thank you for helping to shepherd the nomination of Craig Fugate through the United States Senate. It is exciting to see the hard work and expertise of

a great Floridian like Craig recognized at the national level. I am confident he will continue to make all of Florida proud of his leadership.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything else I can do to help expedite the process of confirming Florida's Craig Fugate to this important post. He is the right person at the right time.

Sincerely,

CHARLIE CRIST,
Florida Governor.

MAY 5, 2009.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL:

The undersigned organizations are members of the Stafford Act Coalition and are writing to ask for swift confirmation of William Craig Fugate as the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The undersigned organizations and associations represent state and local officials, the nation's realtors, surveyors, conservation interests, and others with a stake in flood management and response, disaster mitigation and emergency response and recovery. The Stafford Act Coalition supports hazard mitigation programs and maintaining the intent of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

It is critical that FEMA leadership be put in place swiftly and not delayed. Currently, our nation is addressing the H1N1 flu and the response and recovery for multiple other disasters involving flooding, severe storms, tornadoes and wildfires. We encourage the Senate to confirm Mr. Craig Fugate as FEMA Administrator as swiftly as possible.

Thank you for your support of emergency management issues. If you or your staff has any questions, please contact Kristin Robinson in NEMA's Washington, D.C. Office at (202) 624-5459 or krobinson@csg.org.

Sincerely,

Peter King, American Public Works Association; Larry Decker, American Red Cross; Larry Larson, Association of State Flood Plain Managers; Chris Whately, Council of State Governments; Martha Braddock, International Association of Emergency Managers; Dalen Harris, National Association of Counties; Amy Linehan, National Association of Development Agencies; Susan Gilson, National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies; Kristin Robinson, National Emergency Management Association; Laura Schepis, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; David Conrad, National Wildlife Federation; Franklin Nutter, Reinsurance Association of America.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2009.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: As the President of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), I am writing on behalf of the emergency management directors from the states, the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. We ask for the Senate's immediate action to confirm William Craig

Fugate of Florida as the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is critical that FEMA leadership be put in place swiftly and not delayed.

Currently, our nation is addressing the H1N1 flu, preparing for the upcoming hurricane season, and continuing the response and recovery for multiple other disasters involving flooding, severe storms, tornadoes and wildfires. Mr. Fugate has been a leader in the emergency management community and in NEMA for years and he is widely respected by his peers across the nation. NEMA respectfully encourages the Committee to confirm Mr. Craig Fugate as FEMA Administrator as swiftly as possible.

Thank you for your support of emergency management. If you or your staff has any questions, please contact Kristin Robinson in NEMA's Washington, D.C. Office at (202) 624-5459 or krobinson@csg.org.

Sincerely,

NANCY DRAGANI,
NEMA President and Director of
the Ohio Emergency Management Agency.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it is my hope the hold that is on Craig for an issue unrelated to Craig—related to the question of FEMA putting a flood zone declaration on some areas of New Orleans—it is my hope that we can resolve that and get on. After all, this is now 1 week into the month of May. Remember, hurricane season officially starts June 1.

We need to have Craig Fugate in place so that FEMA is ready to go at this particular time, when there is another challenge facing the gulf coast and the Atlantic coast, and potentially the Pacific coast. I hope the Senate is going to act quickly on his confirmation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF INEZ TENENBAUM AND ROBERT ADLER

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, yesterday President Obama announced he would nominate Inez Tenenbaum as the new Chair of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and Robert Adler as the new CPSC Commissioner. The President also announced he would restore this Commission from a three- to a five-commissioner body and provide \$107 million for the agency in its fiscal year 2010 budget, a 71-percent increase in that budget over President Bush's request for fiscal year 2007.

I share President Obama's commitment to consumer safety and his goal of restoring the CPSC to prominence as our Nation's premier consumer watch-

dog agency. CPSC oversees the safety of over 15,000 consumer products, but for far too long it was hindered by a lack of funding, a lack of staff, outdated authorities and failed leadership. We all remember what happened after that. Faulty cribs that trapped and killed infants; toys coated in lead paint that endangered toddlers and children; magnetic toys that, when swallowed, caused serious injuries and even a child's death.

Most Americans were shocked when they read the stories. They assumed that if they put it on a shelf in a store in America, somebody took a look at it. That is not always the case. Sadly, this agency, which had a special responsibility for dangerous products, had fallen into a state of disrepair, not just in terms of adequate staffing and resources but, unfortunately, in the previous administration, not adequate commitment. There was a belief this had to continue to be a small and virtually unheard of agency at a time when exports into the United States were flooding the market. If there were ever a time when we needed a consumer watchdog, it was over the last 10 years, as more and more of these imports from foreign countries came onto our shores.

We learned the hard way. We learned with pet food from China that had been spiked with melamine for economic reasons and ended up killing a lot of dogs and cats that people dearly loved. We learned it with the toys with lead paint and the toys that were dangerous. We learned this agency was not up to the task.

I can remember meeting with some of the people who worked there. Some of them were good, hard-working people. But when I met with the man whose name was Bob, who was the toy tester, I found that his laboratory for testing toys exported to the United States looked about as bad as my workbench in my basement at home. Unfortunately, he didn't have any kind of technical equipment. What Bob had done was draw a couple marks on the wall, one was at about 4 feet, another at 6 feet, and Bob would take the toy and drop it from 4 feet to see if it fell apart into little pieces that the kids might swallow. If it made that test, Bob took it up to 6 feet and dropped it again. That was the Federal toy testing program for the United States of America.

We learned the hard way, when a lot of dangerous toys were sold and a lot of them went untested. That had to change. With the leadership of one of my colleagues from Arkansas, Senator MARK PRYOR, we embarked on a reauthorization of this agency and gave it new authorities and new powers. Sadly, some of the holdovers—one Commissioner from a previous administration—complained, said she didn't understand why we needed to do this, that we were going too far in giving more power to this agency. It tells you a lot about the mindset of the agency in the old days.